

Kentucky Division of Emergency Management Recovery
- Re engineering the reimbursement process -

KYEM director, Brig. Gen. John W. Heltzel, firmly believes in transparency. This includes exposing weaknesses as well as strengths. By finding our weaknesses – we know where to focus our efforts.

Shortly after being named director of KYEM by Governor Beshear last July, General Heltzel and KYEM lost several employees, equating some 330 years of service to the Commonwealth, due to retirement, including the Recovery Section Supervisor. This position was filled as soon as possible, and shortly thereafter it became apparent that this entire section was grossly understaffed. At this time there were 10 open disasters on the book, dating back to 1999.

KYEM has successfully narrowed the gap and will close two of the previously open disasters using an active management control process to close the remaining disasters within the next year.

Recognizing the hardship that disasters place on local governments, particularly during today's budget woes, and with the support of Governor Beshear, General Heltzel has directed corrective measures be put in place to eliminate inefficiencies in the recovery reimbursement process.

These include:

- Staffing of Recovery Section has been supplemented from a staffing level of 2 fulltime employees to a complement of 22 total staff. Funding for these additions was accomplished by working closely with FEMA for accessing approved management funds.
- The KYEM Recovery Section has moved to newer and larger facilities to support the additional personnel. This has created efficiencies by having the KYEM Administration and Fiscal Section co-located with Recovery staff.
- KyEM, with support from the Commonwealth Office of Technology (COT), is developing a new web based grant management software package which will enable grant managers to more effectively oversee the needs of the local governments. The software will be accessible to officials, allowing access all data and records associated with their disaster projects.
- Working with FEMA, KyEM has taken the lead on implementing a new payment processing procedure which will drastically increase the amount of funds that are returned to local governments for partial payments (from 56.25% to 90%) and decrease the time required to process those payments to local governments. This one step will save months of process time for counties and state agencies waiting for reimbursement.
- To increase overall transparency and tracking capability, KyEM will begin posting a weekly listing of all payments processed for all open disasters to its public website.

KYEM is dedicated to delivering the communities of the Commonwealth an efficient and transparent system to meet our recovery needs.

Re-engineering the reimbursement process doesn't stop here. KYEM is committed to explore and implement any means possible to restore Kentucky communities as soon as possible after a disaster.

With the continued support of the Governor's Office and the dedicated staff now in place, we are sure this will happen.

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